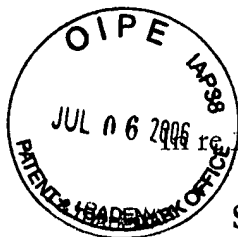


IFX

Docket No.: ASU-0001

PATENT



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of

Confirmation No.: **1046**

**Susan D. ALLEN and Sergey I.
KUDRYASHOV**

Group Art Unit: **1746**

Serial No.: **10/626,880**

Examiner: **Kornakov, Michail**

Filed: **July 25, 2003**

Customer No.: **34610**

For: **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR REMOVING MINUTE PARTICLE(S)
FROM A SURFACE**

REPLY TO ELECTION/RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Customer Service Window
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Sir:

In reply to the Election/Restriction Requirement mailed on June 8, 2006, Applicant elects Group I, claims 1-20 with traverse for further prosecution on the merits. Applicant further elects with traverse the species defined by claim 2, within elected Group I, as required by the Election/Restriction Requirement.

It is noted that the Election/Restriction Requirement includes what appears to be confusing/contradictory requirements. For example, page 3, item 5 of the Requirement states that Group I contains two patentably distinct species, the first as described by claims 2, 3 and 4, and the second as described by claim 5. Then, item 6 on page 3 states that Applicant must elect claim 2 or claim 3 or claim 4, and that claims 1 and 5 are generic. Applicant agrees that claims 1

and 5 are generic, along with at least independent claims 14, 15 and 17. However, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2, 3 and 4 simply describe a portion of the particle removal process to varying degrees of specificity and scope. Thus, the requirement for election of species from amongst claims 2, 3 and 4 should be withdrawn.

It is further submitted that the subject matter of each of the designated inventions, and particularly the subject matter of each of the designated species, is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of each of the designated inventions/species would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining designated inventions/species. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it states that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicant and duplicative examination by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

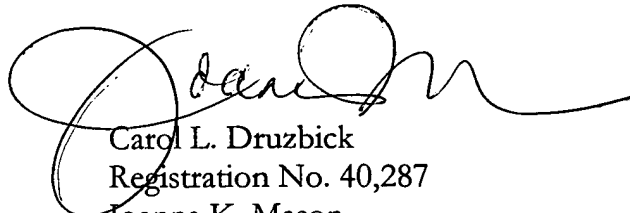
To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this,

Serial No. 10/626,880

Docket No. ASU-0001

concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
FLESHNER & KIM, LLP



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Date: July 6, 2006

Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610

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